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ABE/LINK
Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support
(MTPDS)

Report on the MTPDS School Report Card Pilot

June 10, 2013

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Abbreviations

ASC	Annual School Census
CCAP	Church of Central Africa Presbyterian
CEED	Central East Education Division
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CWED	Central West Education Division
DEM	District Education Manager
DEO	District Education Office
DMO	Divisional Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
EDSA	Education Decentralization Support Activity
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
GoM	Government of Malawi
LEA	Local Education Authority
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
MTPDS	Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support
NED	Northern Education Division
NESP	National Education Sector Plan
NPC	National Primary Curriculum
NSCPPSM	National Strategy for Community Participation in Primary School Management.
PCAR	Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform
PEA	Primary Education Advisor
PSIP	Primary School Improvement Program
PSLCE	Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
SAC	School Assessment Chart
SEED	South East Education Division
SHED	Shire Highlands Education Division
SIG	School Improvement Grant
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMC	School Management Committee
SRC	School Report Card
SWED	South West Education Division
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Introduction

MTPDS Overview

Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support (MTPDS) is a three-year activity designed to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) in implementing teacher education support and systems management as well as supporting the ongoing Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform (PCAR). MTPDS is supporting MoEST in strengthening teacher support, policy, and management systems, as well as the provision of Continuous Professional Development (CPD). Targeting teacher trainers, teachers, school administrators, and children nationwide, MTPDS links with and complements key MoEST and Government of Malawi priority initiatives and plans in teacher education and professional development to (i) strengthen teacher policy, support, and management systems; (ii) enhance teacher performance; (iii) improve early grade literacy; (iv) enhance quality of primary teaching and learning materials; and (v) improve monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems focusing on teacher competencies and learner outcomes.

Overview of the School Report Card Pilot Study

This study documents the experiences of MTPDS in piloting the implementation of School Report Cards (SRCs) in 79 selected schools in seven districts nationwide (Mzimba North, Ntchisi, Salima, Ntcheu, Zomba Rural, Blantyre Rural, and Thyolo). The aim of the SRC intervention was to develop the capacity of parents and communities to monitor and support literacy interventions and implementation of the National Primary Curriculum (NPC) and to support improved teaching and learning in reading in Standards 1-4.

The SRC developed by MTPDS was designed as a tool through which School Management Committees (SMCs) and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) could gather data on school performance with special reference to curriculum implementation and improvement in literacy. It was intended to inform the development of documented School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and to stimulate community action in support of improving teaching and learning. This SRC pilot aimed to strengthen existing efforts of schools under the Primary School Improvement Program (PSIP), to develop SIPs, by sharpening their focus on pupil achievement in literacy.

This study reports on the experiences of schools in implementing the report cards. The aims of the study are as follows:

- To assess the utility of the SRC in supporting the school improvement planning process
- To assess the capacity of SMCs to support school self-assessment
- To investigate the needs of schools as expressed in the SRCs

The report's conclusions are intended to inform future efforts at community mobilization in support of literacy and future implementation of SIPs under PSIP. The study was undertaken as part of the MTPDS task order and responds to Requirement 5.2 – “Enhance Capacity of Parents,

Communities through SMCs and PTAs to Participate in CPD and Early Grade Literacy Monitoring.”¹

Background to MoEST policy on community engagement in schools

Promoting community engagement in the monitoring and support of schools is widely acknowledged as a vital element in school improvement. On the one hand, communities may provide practical support through mobilizing financial, material, and human resources. On the other hand, they may also play an important role in monitoring and holding schools accountable for their performance. This monitoring role is particularly important in a country such as Malawi, where accountability pressure is weak at the school level due to limited resources for external supervision.

Promoting community engagement and participation in education is central to the Government of Malawi’s (GoM) strategy for school improvement. This commitment is set out in the *National Strategy for Community Participation in Primary School Management (NSCPPSM)* of 2004. The document’s subtitle—*The move beyond bricks towards community involvement in whole school development*—demonstrates that in Malawi, communities have traditionally concerned themselves with mobilizing resources for building projects, but that the need for wider engagement in school development is needed. This Strategy sets out a vision of a wider set of roles for school communities in promoting quality education.

Roles for wider community engagement are to be discharged by the SMC and the PTA. The SMC is composed of nine members, who are appointed and elected according to procedures set out in the Education Act of 1962. The PTA comprises the wider school community. The roles and responsibilities for each of these bodies are defined as follows:

- SMC
 - Monitoring attendance and punctuality of both teachers and pupils at school
 - Advising the proprietor of the appointment and dismissal of non-teaching staff
 - Assisting in the enrolment of pupils
 - Encouraging pupils to attend
 - Ensuring that recommendations made by the Ministry of Education are implemented
 - Advising the proprietor whether the conduct of the school is in accordance with the wishes of the local community
 - Checking, inspecting, and maintaining school buildings and equipment

¹ Specifically the study responds to (i) Standard 5.2.a Parents and communities develop capacity to monitor and supporting literacy interventions/PCAR implementation and to support improved teaching and learning in reading in Standards 1-4, and (ii) Standard 5.2.b SMCs and PTAs develop capacity to assist communities in monitoring and supporting NPC/PCAR implementation.

- Initiating development projects at the school with the help of other community members
- Monitoring the quality of learning at the school
- Overseeing the development of the School Action Plan
- PTA
 - Electing the SMC
 - Mobilizing the community around issues identified in the School Action Plan
 - Making the SMC aware of issues of concern in the community regarding the primary school
 - Holding the SMC to account through regular meetings in which the SMC must report on its actions

The NSCPPSM sets the expectation that SMCs undertake a cyclical school management process consisting of the following four steps, each of which is further broken down into sub-elements:

- Planning and design
 - Sensitization
 - Needs assessment and prioritization
 - Social contracts
 - Participation
- Appraisal
 - Budgeting
 - Resource mobilization and allocation
 - Sustainability and ownership
- Implementation
 - Capacity building
 - Supervision and monitoring
- Reflection and Learning
 - Research
 - Evaluation
 - Lesson dissemination

The central focus of this cycle is the development and implementation of an SIP.

In 2004, when the NSCPPSM was first disseminated, the funding of primary education in Malawi remained fully centralized. However through the work of the Education Decentralization Support Activity (EDSA) 2008-2012, a system for the disbursement of School Improvement

Grants (SIGs) was developed and successfully piloted. The SIGs were directly tied to the implementation of SIPs. In 2010, the MoEST adopted this system under its own PSIP, which is being rolled out in phases to all districts nationwide.

All seven districts participating in this study are already receiving SIGs through the PSIP. The precondition for receiving a SIG is for the school and community to produce and obtain district education office approval of their SIP. This provides a financial incentive for the design and implementation of a strong and viable SIP, which in turn strengthens implementation of the NSCPPSM. SMCs are expected to be responsible for managing their SIGs according to the PSIP Financial Management Guidelines (MoEST, 2011b), which stipulate that SIGs must be countersigned by the chairpersons of both the SMC and the PTA.

Key stages in the development and implementation of SIPs depend upon the ability of the SMC to gather and use accurate information about key concerns such as pupil performance and attendance. In PSIP districts, the District Education Office (DEO) provides schools with a graphic presentation of their school's progress according to a set of predetermined indicators. This presentation is referred to as the School Assessment Chart (SAC) and is distributed to schools on an annual basis. Performance on the following indicators is tracked:

- Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination (PSLCE) Pass Rate
- Dropout Rate
- Repetition Rate
- Pupil Classroom Ratio
- Pupil-to-Qualified-Teacher Ratio
- Pupil-to-Latrine Ratio

The data in the SAC, largely derived from the Annual School Census (ASC), is presented in a simple graphical format that allows head teachers and SMCs to draw comparisons with neighboring schools and helps them to see trends in these indicators from year to year.

The Rationale for the MTPDS School Report Card Pilot

The objective of the School Report Card study is to provide data that complements the SAC and directly supports the school and community in using data to inform the development of the SIP. The critical differential of the SRC is that it is designed to provide a mechanism by which the SMC/PTA members themselves can objectively monitor school performance and improvement.

MTPDS has a strong focus on improving early grade literacy. The *USAID Education Strategy 2011–2015* cites “greater engagement, accountability, and transparency by communities and the public” (USAID, 2011, p11) as one of three essential results that feed into its overall global goal of “improved reading skills for 100 million children in primary grades by 2015.” The urgent need to focus the attention of all stakeholders in Malawi on early grade literacy is clearly spelled out in the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) reports of both 2010 and 2011, which showed unacceptably low levels of performance nationwide. This priority has been carried forward by MoEST during 2012 in their efforts to develop a National Reading Action Plan.

The current model for school improvement planning that is being implemented by PSIP explicitly relates the SIPs to realization of the goals of the National Education Sector Plan 2008-2017 (NESP). Schools are guided to structure their plans and associated budgets under the three NESP goals:

- Goal 1: Quality and Relevance (50% of the budget)
- Goal 2: Access and Equity (40% of the budget)
- Goal 3: Governance and Management (10% of the budget)

However, the NESP is largely silent on the topic of early grade literacy. The SRC pilot also represents an attempt to strengthen the focus on early grade literacy within the school improvement planning process currently being supported by PSIP.

Implementation of the MTPDS School Report Card Pilot

The SRC is a tool that aims to promote community engagement to develop the capacity of schools and their communities to monitor and support the implementation of the curriculum. Work on the design of the SRC began at the end of 2011. The following goals and guidelines informed the content and format of the SRC:

- Align with the indicators laid out in the *National Primary Curriculum Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Strategy* (MoEST, 2011b; 2011c)
- Inform and complement the system of school improvement planning as defined by PSIP
- Provide school communities with information required to intervene in support of early grade literacy
- Focus on information that is readily available at that school level and can be collected by community members who are not formally trained as educators (i.e., parents)

An SRC system was trial tested during March 2012. Trial testing involved trial data collection and focus group discussion at Landira Primary School and Kalemo Primary School in Ntchisi District. The instrument was drafted and implemented in Chichewa. During trial testing, a decision was made to include a summary sheet for SMC to use when reporting back to the wider school community during PTA meetings.

Concurrent with this design work, the *Training Manual for Using School Report Cards by School Management Committees* (MTPDS, 2012) was drafted and finalized during April 2012. The training manual was designed to be delivered during one full-day session. Training was divided into the following sessions, each focusing on a different subsection of the SRC:

- Session 1: Welcome protocols
- Session 2: Supporting the implementation of the National Primary Curriculum
- Session 3: Recording school particulars
- Session 4: Data on teaching
- Session 5: Data on learning

- Session 6: Teacher absenteeism
- Session 7: Learner absenteeism
- Session 8: Learning materials
- Session 9: Continuous professional development
- Session 10: Community support
- Session 11: Summary sheet
- Session 12: Guidelines for using the School Report Card

The manual also contained the final version of the SRC in both Chichewa and English (Annex A).

The project decided that the pilot of the SRCs would take place in all schools in one zone from each of the seven MTPDS literacy intervention districts. This arrangement would provide a sufficiently large sample group from a wide range of locations nationwide and would fully utilize the budget and human resources available through MTPDS. The selected zones contained a range of school types and were readily accessible from the District Education Office. A total of 79 schools were involved in the pilot (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Number of schools participating in the SRC Pilot

Division	District	Zone	Number of Schools
Northern Education Division (NED)	Mzimba North	Ekwendeni	16
Central East Education Division (CEED)	Ntchisi	Boma	7
CEED	Salima	Msalura	10
Central West Education Division (CWED)	Ntcheu	Gumbu	12
South East Education Division (SEED)	Zomba Rural	Songani	11
South West Education Division (SWED)	Blantyre Rural	Lunzu	10
Shire Highlands Education Division (SHED)	Thyolo	Mpinji	13
Total			79

A one-day training session for SMCs on using the training manual proceeded on May 26 and 27 and was delivered by MTPDS Divisional M&E Officers (DMOs). In all, 163 participants were trained in the use of SRCs. These participants included 80 SMC members and 83 teachers—at least one of each from each participating school. Primary Education Advisors (PEAs) in the seven zones were also in attendance. After the training, SMC members reported that they felt confident in their ability to carry out monitoring of NPC implementation. During the training workshop, the expectation was set that each school would collect SRC data on a monthly basis and hold a debriefing meeting for parents after each round of data collection.

To support the implementation of the SRCs, between June and December 2012, DMOs organized a series of four half-day follow-up meetings at the zonal level. The two trainees from

each school were invited to these meetings to report on progress and share experiences with their peers.

Methodology for Evaluating the SRC Pilot

Data collection was organized around the three objectives of the study:

- To evaluate the SRC instrument and processes and their utility for supporting the PSIP
- To assess the value of the SRC in building SMC capacity for monitoring school performance
- To investigate the data emerging from the SRC and the utility of these data for tracking school progress and promoting specific community-school actions supporting student literacy learning

To gain insight into the practicalities and utility of the SRC and the capacity of SMCs to use the tool, a small evaluation by project staff was conducted. MTPDS DMOs took part in the evaluation, which was conducted in 10 of the 79 participating schools. Two schools were sampled from each of the six education divisions except for Central West Education Division (**Table 2**).² The results of the evaluation are incorporated into the overall findings and reported in Section 5 below.

Table 2: Number of schools participating in the evaluation of the SRC Pilot

Division	Northern Education Division (NED)	Central East Education Division (CEED)	South West Education Division (SWED)	South East Education Division (SEED)	Shire Highlands Education Division (SHED)
District	<i>Mzimba North</i>	<i>Ntchisi</i>	<i>Blantyre Rural</i>	<i>Zomba Rural</i>	<i>Thyolo</i>
Schools	Ngazi	Kalema	Lunzu	Matiti School	Maonga
	St. Michaels	Ntchisi LEA	Ntenjera	Domasi CCAP	Nachipere

Note: Lea = Local Education Authority; CCAP = Church of Central Africa Presbyterian.

Findings

The findings of the SRC Pilot study are organized according to the three objectives of the study, listed below. Within each objective, priority areas are identified in order to present the most prominent findings from the pilot study.

- **To evaluate the SRC instrument and processes and their utility for supporting the PSIP.**
Evaluates the actual SRC process, the piloted SRC instrument, and lessons learned from the pilot; explores the complementarity of the SRC with the SAC process and the PSIP; and reviews the value of the SRC program with regard to expanding the data available for school improvement planning, and promoting collective community-school improvement actions.

² The DMO for CWED was absent on maternity leave at the time.

- **To assess the value of the SRC in building SMC capacity for monitoring school performance.** Looks into the experiences of SMCs in implementing the SRC and explores their capacity to do so; evaluates what the SRC teams learned during their training and implementation of the pilot; reviews the challenges faced by SRC teams; describes some of the unexpected results related to community-school relationships; and assesses how the process has helped to inform, strengthen, and shift priorities for the SIPs.
- **To investigate the data emerging from the SRC and the utility of these data for tracking school progress and promoting specific community-school actions supporting student literacy learning.** Analyzes the data collected on selected items of the SRC, particularly those that relate to the needs of schools; describes how findings from the SRC have been, or are being, incorporated into the school improvement planning process; and reviews specific actions that were taken by SMCs to address issues identified through the SRC process and the SIPs themselves. The section does not discuss all information that was collected by the SRC teams, especially information that can be found elsewhere (e.g., Annual School Statistics), such as school enrollments.

Objective 1. The SRC instrument and processes

Findings related to the SRC instrument itself

According to the trained SRC teams (SMC member and school staff paired together), some aspects of the instrument were problematic. For example, some of the data proved to be challenging for the SRC teams to collect as the information was often not readily available. Specifically, teacher assessment records, lesson plans, and attendance records were not always maintained at the schools. However, identifying that this information could not be easily collected during the SRC process served to build school consciousness about recordkeeping, and some improvements were noted as a result. Another problematic area was in the calculations that are required in the SRC. Some of the calculations proved to be difficult and unclear to the teams on how they were to be done—for example, calculating the performance of students based on multiple records and calculating percentages of teachers who met certain performance criteria (e.g., percentage of teachers in the school who had all their lesson plans for the day). Most participants felt that the SRC tool was too long and cumbersome and that it needed to be reduced in length.

Problematic items on the SRC

A critical review and analysis of the test items themselves, after their implementation, also revealed some “problem items.” A few items were very difficult to score and thus weakened the validity of the information generated. The following items/questions fell in this category and therefore were not analyzed as part of reporting the results:

- Questions 1-9. Cover basic school demographics and are unremarkable.
- Question 10. *How many Standard 1-4 teachers had all their lesson plans on the day of observation?* Although the question is acceptable, it is not very useful in its current form; given the changing number of teachers from school to school and from visit to

visit, it would be more appropriate to calculate the percentage of teachers at a given school rather than the actual number in order to ensure comparable results if compiled across schools and occasions of observation. Many participating members reported that obtaining information on lesson plans was particularly difficult.

- Question 12. *How many Standard 1-4 lessons were not taught during the month?* Teacher records were not consistently available to provide this information.
- Question 14. *What was the average grade for learners in literacy in Standard 2 and Standard 4 during the month?* Teachers records were not consistently available to provide this information. In addition, there was no consistent way of identifying the period of performance reviewed.
- Question 15. *Has there been progress in achievement levels in literacy in Standard 2 and Standard 4?* This is generally not a good question to ask teachers. Even if they have not seen progress, it is rare that they will say “no,” because such a response reflects badly on their performance. The data confirms this, with all but two teachers reporting a positive trend.
- Questions 16 and 19. *What percentage of teachers in Standard 1-4 were absent during the month?* It is difficult to obtain comparable results with this question, since “during the month” is not readily defined. Alternatively, Question 19 (*What percentage of Standard 1-4 teachers were absent on the day of data collection?*) is a related question and lends itself to more valid answers.
- Questions 24 and 25. *What is the average number of absentees during the month in Standard 2 and Standard 4?* Like Question 16 above, these are very difficult to interpret and are confounded further by the unavailability of records and the need for the data collector to engage in calculations in an otherwise very time-consuming data collection process. All of these situations weaken both the validity and reliability of results.
- Question 26. *Has the school kept records of absent learners during the month?* This question is similar to Question 15 in that almost no one says “no” to this question. During data collection, only one head teacher in the second data collection, and three in first, reported they were not keeping records on student attendance. It is usually advisable to avoid such questions where teachers or head teachers would have good reason to avoid giving a negative response, such as disclosing that they do not keep records. It is usually much better to observe the phenomenon of interest directly—for example, by looking at the school records.

Useful items on the SRC

Although the items discussed above were problematic, there were a number of other items that were well-structured and proved to facilitate the collection of useful data that is not readily available through the regular PSIP processes. A few examples of these items are discussed below:

- Questions 21 and 22. *What is the percentage attendance of Standard 2 pupils **today** by gender?* These questions on pupil attendance lend themselves to stronger validity, asking only about the day of observation.
- Questions 19, 21, and 22. These questions provide data that are easily attainable (i.e., there is no need to look back through school records) and provide important information on teacher and pupil attendance.
- Questions 27-29. These questions are qualitative in nature and are important because they help the SRC team to understand the reasons behind the quantitative results and help guide and inform planning and school support on the SIP. In the future, providing additional training on how to elicit discussion from the interviewee or encouraging the SRC team to hold small focus group discussions would help evoke richer answers. Additionally, a group discussion might also serve to strengthen relations within a broad base of school personnel, possibly leading to shared responsibility in results.
- Questions 30-35. These questions focus on the availability of materials. The findings from these results suggest that the SRC process and on-site SMC school monitoring may make a difference, since there were some small increases in the availability of Standard 2 textbooks and Standard 2 supplementary readers from the first to the last SMC visit. Although it is difficult to attribute this change to the SRC program alone (since reading interventions also were taking place in the schools), communities did make contributions (through the SIP) in the area of providing materials, more so than in other areas of learning-related community support.
- Questions 36 and 37. These questions focus on the provision of teacher support from the head teacher and the PEA. These items also showed potential impact of the SRC process, demonstrating an increase in head teacher observations of teachers from the first to the second visit, but no change in the number of PEA visits.
- Questions 38-46. These questions capture essential information about how the community supports the school, and specifically how the community provides support for the learning of learners. For example, communities can support learning in a variety of ways, including the provision of materials, after-school assistance to learners, and in-classroom assistance to teachers. These questions address the core objective of the SRC process and thus are important in collecting the information needed.

Findings related to the SRC data collection process

An analysis of the SRC questions and their results demonstrates that this information has been successfully collected; however, the qualitative inquiry process could be adjusted and improved upon. Information gathered through questions related to community involvement could be improved by shifting the data collection method from individual interviews to a focus group discussion format. This change would require adjusting the training program to include training in qualitative inquiry and in hosting small group discussion, specifically on the topics covered in these types of questions (i.e., Questions 27-29 and 38-46).

Such open discussions with small groups of diverse stakeholders would promote a deeper understanding about these topics and, at the same time, further strengthen relations between schools and communities. Importantly, these discussions also could serve as a platform for dialogue about collective actions to address issues that arise, or could encourage the basis for regular dialogue or meetings between the actors. The information on the status of affairs and actions for addressing them—actions that improve schools and learning—may result in a more dynamic school-level PSIP process.

With the right training on qualitative inquiry and action research, the SMC could emerge as a much more powerful force in the entire school-level PSIP process and promote a much higher level of interaction between schools and communities in efforts to improve teaching and learning for their children. Such dynamic school-community action research methodology also promotes shared responsibility for and accountability of school improvement outcomes.

Modifying and field testing the SRC instrument

Given the review of the instrument itself and the SRC process (described in this section), it is important that the instrument design be revisited and modified along with the associated school visit and data collection guidelines. Such changes might include modifications in the organizational structure, the length of the instrument, and the methodology (e.g., interview, self-report survey, focus group discussion) used. The tools and processes should be adequately field tested in a few schools where school personnel and a selection of community members are actively involved in the process.

Objective 2. Value of the SRC in building SMC capacity for monitoring school performance

The most noteworthy and important finding related to the capacity of the SMC members was that SMC members were, with the right training, fully capable to engage in school-based monitoring of school performance and were able to effectively lead an on-site monitoring activity, working in partnership with a teacher or other school staff member. As a result of this experience, the SMC members successfully engaged in a variety of methodologies, analyses, dissemination, and utilization, including the following:

- Successfully engaging in a variety of data collection methodologies, including quantitative with some limited qualitative methodologies
- Conducting simple mathematical calculations such as the calculation of an average student score and percentage calculations
- Hosting participatory debriefing sessions to share information
- Promoting the use of school data to inform actions and the SIP

SMC members highlighted the following as key outcomes from the training and accompanying process:

- Empowering them to be active and productive SMC members

- Increasing their knowledge of their role in supporting the implementation of the new primary curriculum
- Enhancing their knowledge about important factors for children to develop reading skills and the barriers that inhibit learning to read
- Opening the doors to the classroom and providing them with an opportunity to assist in the learning process
- Using data to prioritize issues to be included in SIP proposals
- Improving record keeping, both at the school and for the SMC

Findings related to the SMC school monitoring process

Although there initially was considerable resistance from school staff to having the SMC members actually go into the schools for monitoring, observing school records and classrooms, and interviewing staff over the life of the pilot, eventually the majority of staff from participating schools overwhelmingly welcomed the SMC members into their schools and classrooms, seeing the SMC as an advocate for mobilizing the community and others to help improve the quality of learning.

Teachers, head teachers, and SMC members themselves came to see enormous value in the SRC process of bringing the community to the school and promoting direct involvement in school improvement monitoring. SMC members reported that through this on-site monitoring program they were able to see the school from the inside which was rarely done before. Some reported that this was the first time they felt recognized as important stakeholders in school improvement. The SRC process led to improved community-school relations, more active participation of teachers in SMC and PTA committee meetings, and more active involvement of teachers in school improvement planning.

Empowered by their deepened understanding of “school life” and understanding of the challenges faced at schools, SMCs were motivated to help address these challenges. Thus the awareness building, the positive community-school relations, and the enhanced teacher involvement in school improvement planning were positive impacts from the school-based program involving SMC members and a school staff working cooperatively.

One of the most critical elements of the SRC monitoring process was the establishment of a “team” of SRC data collectors, which, as mentioned above, consisted of an SMC member (often a parent) and one school staff member (usually a teacher). The combination of “community and school” in the process itself seemed to be the underpinning factor in building relationships and planting seeds for collective actions for school improvement.

and head teachers were
members monitoring
ing that SMC members
icly expose the school's
also felt that the SMC
qualified to monitor or
however, when the school
w the SMC—after
s at the school—
ated on behalf of the
d community actions to
resistance quickly

Focus group discussions, which were held after each community debriefing session, were a particularly useful method for promoting awareness of the need for communities and parents to more directly support improved literacy in the schools. In the future, a debriefing session for school staff by the SRC teams might also be considered.

During the review of the SRC pilot, head teachers noted the benefits of the SRC process for providing accountability to both the school and community. Additionally, they appreciated the consensus building which was developed through the acknowledgment of shared roles in school improvement for both the community and teachers. The identification of roles for the teachers and learners, as well as the community members, were highlighted as key issues which are often poorly featured in the SIPs.

All participants reported that the SMC process brought the school and its community closer together, “bridging the gap between home and school.”

In addition, the process of reviewing school records led to improved record keeping for both school staff and the SMC committee. The improved record keeping was an unexpected positive result.

Participating SMC members and teachers reported, however, that the data collection process was too long and cumbersome. Some teachers suggested that a more strategic organization of the visit should be developed to avoid disrupting classes.

Objective 3. Utility of the data for tracking school progress and promoting specific community-school actions supporting student literacy learning

Utility of the SRC to inform school improvement planning

Although some lessons were learned in terms of the SRC process and instrument, the overwhelming result of the SRC school monitoring pilot was that the process proved to be an important mechanism for strengthening school-community relations, as noted above, as well as for informing the school improvement planning process in relation to the PSIP. What is most noteworthy is that as a result of the SRC process, schools and communities together often planned and implemented immediate actions to address issues emerging from the SRC data.

The following section describes the priority challenges identified through the SRC pilot and how they were addressed. Findings are presented from the analyses of selected data that were collected from the SRC—specifically data that helped to spark community-school actions for school improvement. Given some of the validity issues provided by the structure of the question itself (discussed in the section on Objective 1), the findings do not cover each and every SRC question. Rather, findings that link data from the SRC directly to the school improvement process are highlighted.

SMC debriefings on the SRC findings with communities revealed the priority concerns, as discussed below, all of which triggered specific actions for addressing them. Generally, these actions made their way to the SIP, but not always. However, it is noteworthy that in many cases when communities worked together with teachers and head teachers, the collective group took responsibility and action together and did so immediately without waiting for the SIP process to

come through. The SRC showed to be a powerful tool for stimulating important dialogue about school performance and generating advocacy for improved learning outcomes. Described below are some of the main concerns that the data identified and the ways in which these concerns were addressed.

- **Understaffing**

To address understaffing, SMC members went directly to the DEOs and discussed the issue with the District Education Manager (DEM). As with many of the actions below, the main factor that made the difference and triggered action by SMCs was that SMC members identified the gaps themselves. When, through the SRC process, they witnessed the understaffing with their own eyes, they were prompted to approach the DEMs. Reportedly, in some instances, the DEM mobilized as a result to resolve the teacher shortage in that school.

- **Teacher absenteeism and punctuality.** It was found that teachers are absent or late to class very often in many schools? This issue was addressed in many ways, the most common of which was the SMCs' getting involved in counseling teachers themselves, sometimes including the head teacher in the discussion.

Another way in which this was addressed was by bringing communities together to make housing available for teachers. Although less prominent, it was a significant and important step in deterring teacher absenteeism and tardiness.

Figure 1: Percentage of Standard 1-4 teachers absent

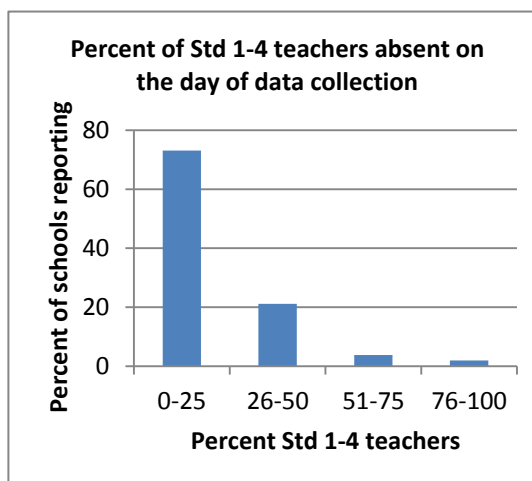
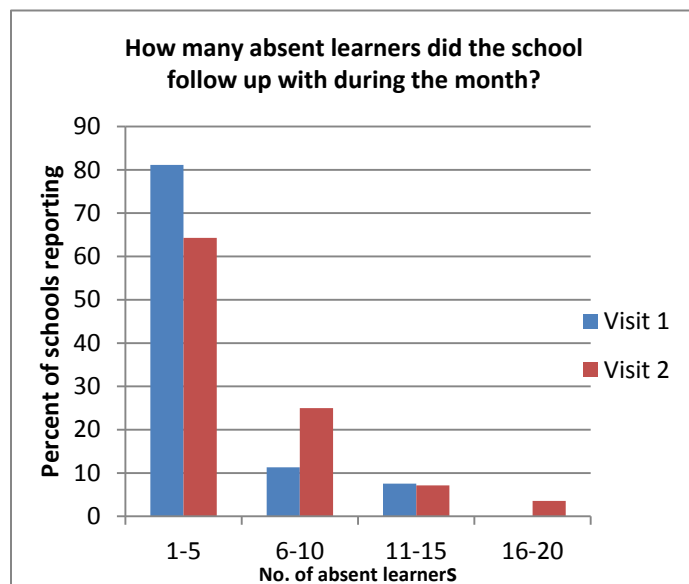


Figure 1 shows that in approximately 20% (11) of the schools, more than 25% of the teachers were absent on the day of data collection. In three schools, over 50% of the teachers were absent on the day of data collection.

- **Pupil absenteeism.** Similar to teacher absenteeism above, as a result of information discovered through the SRC process on pupil absenteeism, SMCs responded by getting involved in counseling learners about attendance. Teachers also discussed attendance with their learners.

Figure 2: Percentage of absent learners followed up



Another community input to address learner absenteeism was the construction of latrines at the school. This was generally included in the SIPs, since it entailed additional funds.

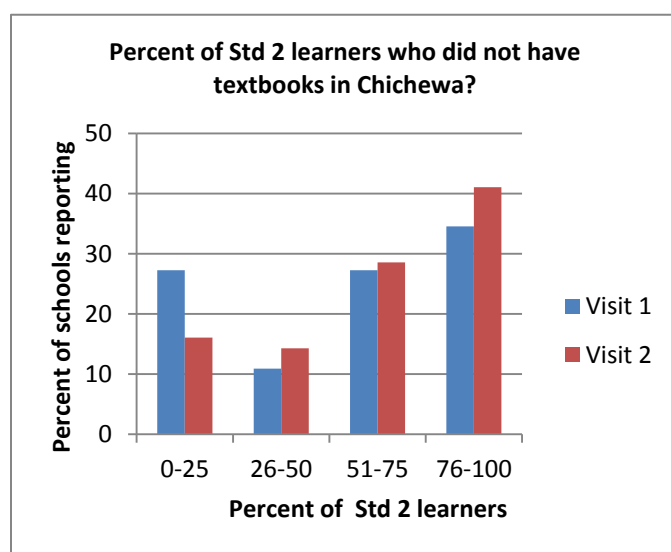
One of the communities noted that as a result of the SRC, many SMC and PTA members in the village had begun to bring children back to school immediately when they found them at the market instead of attending school.

Figure 2 shows that at the time of the second visit by the SRC team there was still very little follow-up of absent learners. Although SMCs have reported on seeing the initiatives noted above, they have yet to show a measurable impact in the SRC data.

- **Limited numbers of textbooks and other learning materials, especially books.**

As a result of direct observations in many schools where there were very limited materials, SMC members became true advocates for supporting material provision at schools. Visits to the DEO offices and discussions with the Member of Parliament were reported as actions that immediately returned results.

Figure 3: Percentage of Standard 2 learners without Chichewa textbooks



In some communities, the SMC and PTA visited nearby villages to find schools that had more than enough materials. These SMCs organized meetings with other SMCs from nearby villages to explore whether there were ways they could work together to help each other address the shortage of materials in their own schools.

These joint SMC meetings helped them realize that other schools faced similar challenges, which was in itself powerful in reinforcing their respective need to mobilize actions to address the problem.

Some SMC members mentioned that the debriefing sessions were useful in building awareness among parents about the importance of reading and writing with

their children.

Figures 3 and 4 show that there continues to be a large number of children without textbooks, thus prompting the initiatives mentioned above.

SMC members encountered and reported frequently the problem of teachers keeping textbooks locked up in cabinets in order to keep them from getting worn.

Even though the textbook situation has not improved yet in the percentage of learners who have textbooks in class, the information made available to the community through the

SRC seems to be initiating the efforts to address this problem, as described above. These efforts appear to have already made an impact on the number of supplemental reading materials being used by learners as shown in **Figure 5**.

- **Learning outcomes in reading.** Arguably one of the most important outcomes of the pilot was that when SMC members saw for themselves the limited reading performance of children, this became a topic of interest to communities and was shared openly. A number of success stories emerged as a result:
 - One school identified volunteers from the village reading centers to help children in learning to read and provide remedial support.

Figure 4: Percent of Standard 2 learners without English textbooks

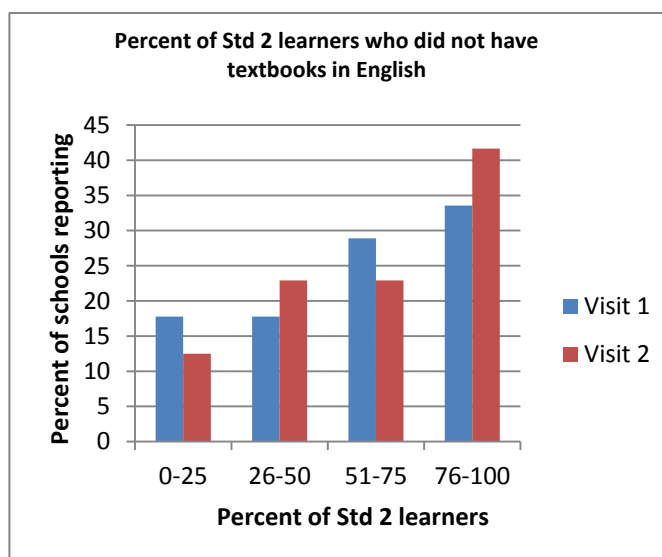
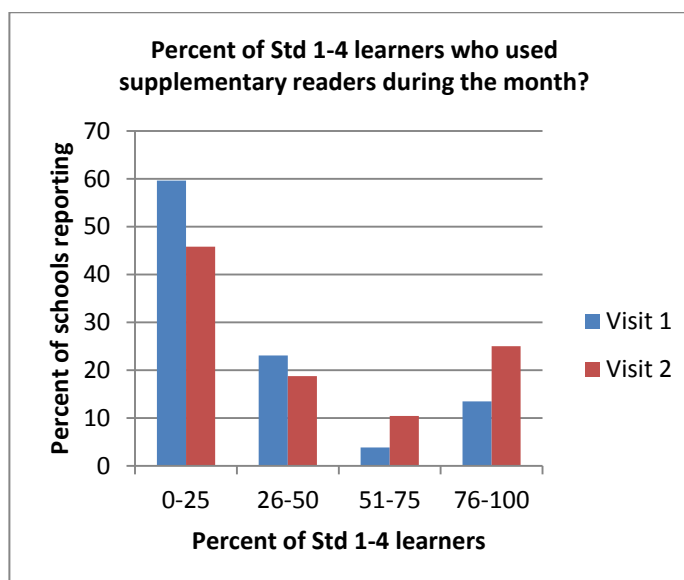


Figure 5: Percent of Standard 1-4 learners who used supplementary readers



- In several instances, parents collected old calendars and other materials from which they could work with teachers to make reading cards and wall charts.
- Parents and other community members organized storytelling activities in the classrooms.
- At least one community developed a feeding program at the school as a way of ensuring that children would have the energy they needed to enable the addition of an extra hour for teaching reading in the early grades.
- The SRC process and the supporting dialogue helped to improve parent and teacher relationships. The simple fact that communities were updated on learner outcomes was powerful in strengthening these relationships.

Table 3 shows SRC results from the first to the second visits. It can be seen in this table that reading fairs (not listed above as it is purely a school activity, not a community activity), display of posters in the classroom, and importantly, the provision of additional time for reading are the most frequent types of interventions made by communities to support reading.

During the pilot activity, the SRC was able to provide information about the types of activities that communities can support. In the future, given the interest demonstrated by communities, it will be important to leverage community dialogue to mobilize community-driven initiatives rather than simply surveying what they have done.

Table 3: Literacy activities that took place during the months of the first and second SRC visits

Activity	Frequency Reported	
	Visit 1	Visit 2
Display of posters	8	9
Encouraging reading		1
Frequent reading		1
Giving tests	1	2
Lending them books	2	2
Meeting teachers		1
Meeting with parents		1
Reading additional books	3	5
Reading competition	6	9
Reading homework	2	1
Reading Mazikoakuwerenga		2
Reading Ndithakuwerenga		2
Reading old books	1	1

Reading poems	1	
SMC/PTA meeting	1	
Supply of reading books		1
Reading extra hours	13	13
Teaching properly	1	
Teaching syllables	2	1
Use of reading books	1	2
No action	5	3

- Enhanced school improvement planning.** Participating SMC members reported that working directly in schools and with teachers helped to improve the prioritization of issues to be addressed during school improvement planning and the development of the SIP. Importantly, the SRC process and involvement of SMC members and teachers together as a team improved the active participation of teachers in the process. The SRC helped to fill in gaps in learning indicators that are not addressed by the SIP.

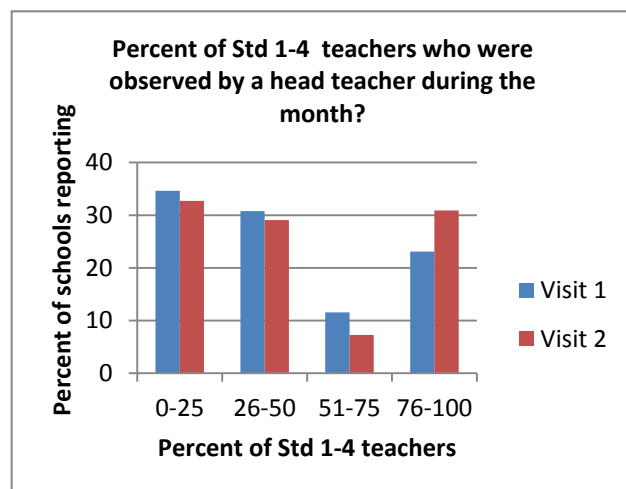
Table 4 provides information about the types of initiatives that were addressed in the SIPs of the pilot SRC schools. It reports the number of schools which included each particular activity in its SIP. In general, the plans were focused largely on infrastructure and facilities improvements, but some plans also addressed issues around teaching and learning materials and supplies.

Table 4: Types of initiatives addressed in the SIPs

Activity	Frequency Reported	
	Visit 1	Visit 2
Building a school block	2	3
Building houses	3	4
Building shelter	1	
Building toilets	6	10
Buying instructional materials		7
Buying materials	9	
Buying uniforms for needy learners	1	
Carrying sand	1	1
Collecting food stuff for school feeding programs	1	
Construction of temporary classrooms		1
Providing money to SIP	1	
Digging pit latrines	1	

Activity	Frequency Reported	
	Visit 1	Visit 2
Distributing instructional materials		1
Giving presents to learners who are doing well in class		2
Guiding orphans	1	
Identification of school needs		1
Improving learner punctuality	1	
Maintenance of houses		2
Making bricks	4	3
Making school report cards		1
Meeting about exams		1
Organizing literacy groups		1
Preparing a SIP plan	3	
Raising funds		2
Recruiting volunteer teachers	1	1
Repairing a roof of a house	1	
Repairing classrooms	7	7
SMC/PTA meeting	3	1
Working on SIP projects	1	
No action	1	1

Figure 6: Percent of teachers observed by head teacher



- Support for teachers.** Another area of improvement that appears to be attributed, in part at least, to the SRC process is the extent to which head teachers visited and/or held meetings with their teachers. There was a noticeable increase in the number of head teacher meetings with teachers from the first to the second SMC school visit. This was not the case for the PEA visits, which either stayed the same or decreased in number.

It can be seen from **Figure 6** that the number of teachers visited by a head teacher increased from Visit 1 to Visit 2. However, in approximately 30% of the schools, only a third of the teachers were visited by the head teacher in a month. Few teachers were visited by the PEA, **Figure 7**. This would seem to be an

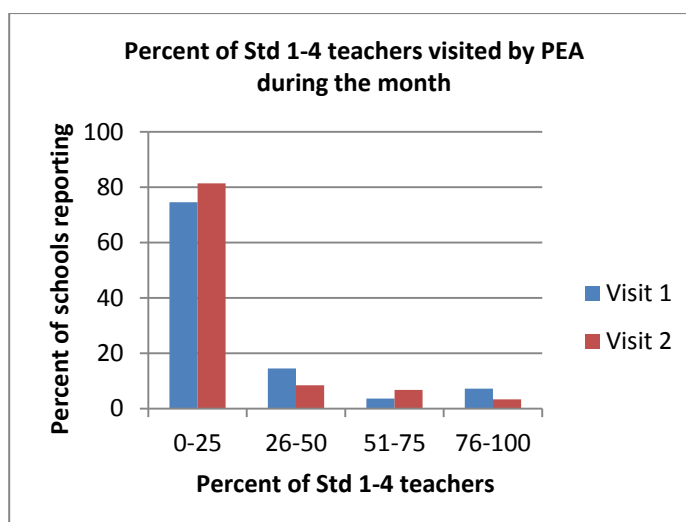
important area that the school and community could work together on.

- School record keeping.**

On the first visit for the SRC, there were very low levels of record retention with regards to learners' assessment scores, learner attendance, etc. As mentioned above, record keeping improved at the school as a result of the SRC process. The

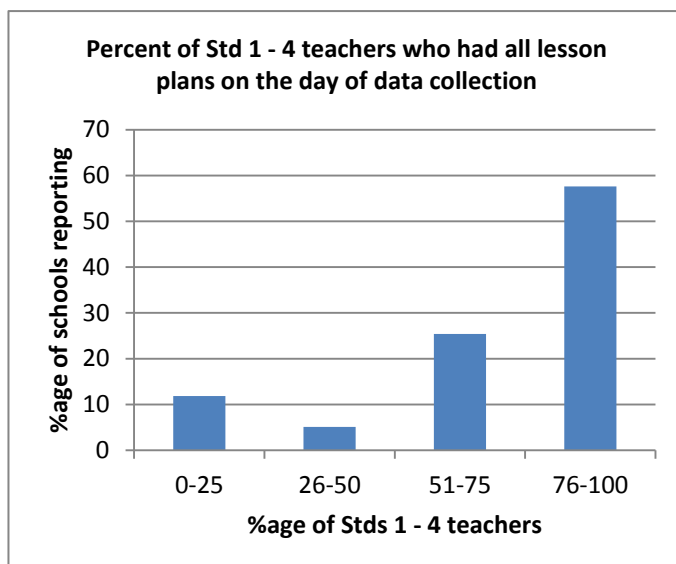
process also promoted improved record keeping for the SMCs and PTAs themselves.

Figure 7: Percent of Standard 1-4 teachers visited by PEA



- Limited lesson preparation.** SMCs were concerned that the majority of teachers did not have lesson plans for all of their lessons. **Figure 8** shows results suggesting that about 58% of the schools reported that over 75% of teachers had all of their lesson plans on the day of the SMC visit, with approximately 25% of the schools having between 50%

Figure 8: Percent of Standard 1-4 teachers with lesson plans



and 75% teachers had all of their lesson plans.

Approximately 17% of the schools reported that less than 50% of the teachers had all of their lesson plans for the day.

Recommendations and Conclusion

SRC instrument and process

As was discussed in the previous sections, a number of issues regarding the SRC instrument and the process were revealed through the pilot activity. These will need to be addressed and improved upon if the SRC is to be used in the future or incorporated into the PSIP. For example, in some instances the SRC team could substitute a survey for teachers to fill out themselves rather than using the conventional interview techniques. There are areas where the process could substitute for more qualitative processes such as focus group discussions for some of the processes that were included in the piloted SRC. For example, rather than conducting individual interviews, it is important that school members have a chance to meet and collaboratively discuss ways that issues are to be addressed. This is a much more creative process and further mobilizes the important shared vision and shared responsibility for change. If these different methodologies were to be applied, additional training on qualitative data collection would be required.

Additional training on the matters discussed above and refreshing, improving, and extending the participants on the current training are highly recommended. It is clear from this pilot that even a few new skills in monitoring school performance at the school-community level go a long way in mobilizing shared responsibility and collective action for improving educational quality. It is also recommended that the number and diversity of participants included in the training should be increased. For example, head teachers, traditional leaders, and a larger set of SMC/PTA members should be trained. Strategies to train and engage parents more fully in the process

should be explored to build their capacity and appreciation of their role in supporting the improvement of their school. Ideas such as creating “parent monitor champions” who have a special mandate to engage other parents in small groups to discuss findings and address issues should be explored.

The SRC process itself—having SMCs and teachers work together to monitor school performance—proved to be a success and was an experience that most community members and teachers had not had before. Even going into the school was “a first” for many of the participating SMC members (mostly parents) and the teachers had rarely, if ever, worked directly with community members in reviewing school performance.

However, some improvements are recommended in the process:

- Streamline the process by simplifying and reducing the length of the instrument
- Better plan the role of the SRC teams and timing of their monitoring visits to ensure they are not intruding in the teachers’ classrooms
- Hold debriefing sessions with school staff in addition to the debriefing sessions with the community members
- Enhance the community debriefing session to include a wider range of community members, not just SMC and PTA members
- Conduct more cross-community SMC meetings to learn and plan together, promoting a cross-fertilization of ideas

The potential complement of the SRC to the ongoing National PSIP

The PSIP, which applies the SAC to mobilize diverse stakeholder to engage in dialogue and review their school’s performance, has been scaled up across the nation with enormous success. The information generated from the SAC provides information that allows schools and communities to view their performance on basic education indicators (with data sourced from the EMIS annual school census) and to review school performance within the context of the district overall.

The SRC process and instrument can potentially complement the PSIP in two important ways:

1. The SRC provides school-based data that are directly tied to learning, and are not covered in the SAC, but are nevertheless critical for guiding community actions. The PSIP looks at a broad range of school quality indicators but it does not focus specifically on learning. Thus the data collected through the SRC process can play a strong complementary role to the PSIP, since it focuses more specifically on indicators tied directly to learning. Information such as those listed below indicates only a few of the areas that have been observed and acted upon as a result of the SRC process:
 - Teacher absenteeism, punctuality, and actions to address them
 - Pupil absenteeism and actions to address them

- Real-time information on learning materials and insight into the source of the problem
 - Information about teacher support given by head teachers and PEAs
2. The opportunity to allow SMC members to actually go into the schools and work side-by-side with a teacher in collecting data and together hosting the community debriefings. The value of this activity has been emphasized throughout this report and cannot be overstated.

There have been some recommendations in how to improve the tool and process itself, but the overwhelming factor in the success of the SRC process is the impact of the two factors stated above, which can potentially enhance the PSIP.

The integration of the SRC process and instrument into the national PSIP

The strongest conclusion that can be made from this pilot is that the SRC process and instrument have demonstrated successes in fostering greater community-school dialogue and partnership in identifying and addressing issues directly related to learning at the school. Therefore, it is recommended that MoEST should build upon what has been learned from the SRC pilot and identify which components of the SRC process and instrument can be improved upon and integrated into the PSIP. The SRC tool and monitoring process should not be viewed as a separate or parallel activity to the PSIP, but rather as an activity that can be learned from, built upon, and incorporated into the current PSIP to bolster its ability to monitor and address issues directly related to teaching and learning in schools.

In conclusion, the SRC program has shown to have enormous value in mobilizing collective community-school actions for school improvement and has proven to complement, and not duplicate, the SAC and PSIP. Thus, it is strongly recommended that the MoEST, and more specifically the PSIP Unit in the Department of Basic Education, explore ways to learn from and improve upon the SRC process and look into ways it can be integrated into the PSIP. In doing so, the PSIP can potentially become an instrument for improved school learning as well as for general school quality improvement.

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Annex A. School Report Card Instruments

School Report Card (English)

Monitoring and Evaluation of the National Primary Curriculum by SMC/PTA

A School Particulars

1. Name of school			2. School ID		
3. Zone			4. District		
5. Division			6. Date		
7. Name of school committee member			8. Name of assisting teacher		
9. No of Std 1 – 4 teachers at the school			10 Enrolment in the school		
	Males	Females		Males	Females
Std 1			Std 1		
Std 2			Std 2		
Std 3			Std 3		
Std 4			Std 4		
Total			Total		

B Teaching	1st Month	2nd Month	3rd Month
11. How many Std 1 - 4 teachers had all lesson plans on the day of data collection?			
12. How many Std 1- 4 lessons were not taught during the month?			
13. How many Std 1- 4 teachers recorded assessment of learners during the month?			

C Learning	1st Month	2nd Month	3rd Month
14. What was the average grade for learners in literacy in Std 2 during the month?			
15. What was the average grade for learners in literacy in Std 4 during the month?			
16. Has there been progress in achievement levels in literacy in Std 2 during the month?			
17. Has there been progress in achievement levels in literacy in Std 4 during the month?			

D Teacher Attendance	1st Month	2nd Month	3rd Month
18. How many teachers in Std 1- 4 were absent during the month? (Count the total number of days of absence for all teachers in the month)			
19. How many Std 1- 4 teachers were absent on the day of data collection?			

20. What were the main reasons for teacher absenteeism?			
21. How many Std 1 - 4 teachers were present at the start of the day of data collection?			

E Learner Attendance	1 st Month	2 nd Month	3 rd Month
22. What is the attendance of Std 2 learners today by gender?	M F	M F	M F
23. What is the attendance of Std 4 learners today by gender?	M F	M F	M F
24. What was the average number of absentees per day during the month in Std 2 by gender?	M F	M F	M F
25. What was the average number of absentees per day during the month in Std 4 by gender?	M F	M F	M F
26. Has the school kept records of absent learners during the month? (Ask to see records)			
27. How many absentee learners did the school follow up during the month?			
28. What remedial measures were taken to reduce absenteeism?			
29. How many learners were counseled for coming late to school during the month?			

F Instructional Materials	1 st Month	2 nd Month	3 rd Month
30. How many Std 2 learners did not have textbooks in Chichewa during the month?			
31. How many Std 4 learners did not have textbooks in Chichewa during the month?			
32. How many Std 2 learners did not have English textbooks during the month?			
33. How many Std 4 learners did not have English textbooks during the month?			
34. How many Std 1 - 4 children used supplementary readers during the month?			

G Professional Support	1 st Month	2 nd Month	3 rd Month
35. How many Std 1 - 4 teachers were observed by Head teacher during the month?			
36. How many Std 1 - 4 teachers were observed by PEA during the month?			

37. How many Std 1 - 4 teachers attended CPD during the month?			
38. What activities which promote literacy took place during the month? (Describe)			

H Community Support	1st Month	2nd Month	3rd Month
39. How many times did the SMC/PTA assist teachers in Std 1 – 4 in classroom work during the month?			
40. How many times did the community provide support to learners in Std 1 – 4 in classroom work during the month?			
41. How did the SMC/PTA discourage teacher absenteeism during the month?			
42. In what way did the SMC/PTA discourage learner absenteeism during the month?			
43. In what way did the SMC/PTA encourage teacher punctuality during the month?			
44. In what ways did the SMC/PTA encourage learner punctuality during the month?			
45. What actions have the SMC/PTA taken on last School Improvement Plans during the month?			
46. What are the priorities for SMC/PTA in the School Improvement Plans for the coming month?			

School Report Card (Chichewa)

Monitoring and Evaluation of the National Primary Curriculum by SMC/PTA

A ZA SUKULU YATHU

1. Dzina la sukulu	2. School ID																																				
3. Zone	4. District																																				
5. Division	6. Date																																				
7. Dzina la membala wa Komiti ya Sukulu	8. Dzina la mphunzitsi wothandizira																																				
9. Nambala ya maphunzitsi a Std 1 – 4 pa sukulu <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>amuna</th> <th>akazi</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Std 1</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Std 2</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Std 3</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Std 4</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chiwerengero Chonse</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		amuna	akazi	Std 1			Std 2			Std 3			Std 4			Chiwerengero Chonse			10. Chiwerengero cha ana ophunzira <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>anyamata</th> <th>atsikana</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Std 1</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Std 2</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Std 3</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Std 4</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chiwerengero Chonse</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		anyamata	atsikana	Std 1			Std 2			Std 3			Std 4			Chiwerengero Chonse		
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Std 2																																					
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B Kuphunzitsa	Source	Accessibility	Comments
11. Ndi aphunzitsi a mu Std 1 – 4 angati omwe ali ndi ma lesson plan pa tsiku lomwe mwayendera sukulu?			
12. Ndi ma lesoni angati a mu Std 1-4 amene sanaphunzitsidwe mwezi umenewu?			
13. Ndi aphunzitsi angati a mu Std 1 – 4 amene analemba kakhozidwe ka ophunzira mwezi umenewu?			

C Kuphunzira	Source	Accessibility	Comments
14. Kodi ophunzira ambiri a mu Std 2 anakhoza bwanji mu Chichewa(kuwerenga) mwezi wapitawu?			
15. Kodi ophunzira ambiri a mu Std 4 anakhoza bwanji mu Chichewa(kuwerenga) mwezi wapitawu?			
16. Kodi panali kupita patsogolo kulikonse mu kuwerenga mu Std 2 mumwezi wapitawu kulekana ndi kale?			

17. Kodi panali kupita patsogolo kulikonse mu kuwerenga mu Std 4 mumwezi wapitawu kulekana ndi kale?			
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D Kubwera ku sululu kwa aphunzitsi	Source	Accessibility	Comments
18. Kodi aphunzitsi a Std 1 – 4 anajomba kangati mwezi wathau? (Onse pamodzi anajomba masiku angati)			
19. Kodi ndi aphunzitsi a Std 1 - 4 angati amene ajomba patsiku lomwe mwayendera sukulu?			
20. Kodi ndi zifukwa zenizeni ziti zomwe aphunzitsi anajombera mwezi wathawu?			
21. Ndi aphunzitsi a Std 1 -4 angati amene analipo poyamba pa tsiku lomwe mwayendera sukulu?			

Source	Accessibility	Comments	Source
22. Kodi anyamata ndi atsikana a Std 2 abwera angati lero?			
23. Kodi anyamata ndi atsikana a Std 4 abwera angati lero?			
24. Patsiku lililonse, ndi anyamata ndi atsikana a Std 2 angati amene amajomba mwezi wathawu?			
25. Patsiku lililonse, ndi anyamata ndi atsikana a Std 4 angati amene amajomba mwezi wathawu?			
26. Kodi sukulu inasunga kaundula wa ana ojomba mwezi wathawu? (pemphani kuti muone kaundula ameneyu)			
27. Ndi ophunzira angati omwe anajomba ndipo aphunzitsi anawatsatira kukawaona kunyumba kwao mwezi wangothawu?			
28. Kodi sukulu inapanga chiyani kuti ichepetse kujomba kwa ana a sukulu?			
29. Ndi ana angati amene anapatsidwa chiongolero chifukwa chochedwa pobwera kusukulu mwezi wangothawu?			

F Zopangizo zophunzitsira	Source	Accessibility	Comments
30. Ndi ana a Std 2 angati amene analibe mabuku a Chichewa mwezi wathawu?			

31. Ndi ana a Std 4 angati amene analibe mabuku a Chichewa mwezi wathawu?			
32. Ndi ana a Std 2 angati amene analibe mabuku a English mwezi wathawu?			
33. Ndi ana a Std 4 angati amene analibe mabuku a English mwezi wathawu?			
34. Ndi ana a Std 1 – 4 angati omwe awerengapo ma supplementary readers mwezi wathawu?			

G Chithandizo choperekedwa kwa aphunzitsi	Source	Accessibility	Comments
35. Ndi aphunzitsi a Std 1 – 4 angati amene ayenderedwa ndi a head mwezi wathawu?			
36. Ndi aphunzitsi a Std 1 – 4 angati amene ayenderedwa ndi a PEA mwezi wathawu?			
37. Ndi aphunzitsi angati a Std 1- 4 amene anapita ku CPD mwezi wathawu?			
38. Ndi zochitika zotani zothandiza kuti ana adziwe kuwerenga zomwe zachitika pa sukulu mwezi wathawu? (Talongosolani)			

H Chithandizo chochokera ku makolo	Source	Accessibility	Comments
39. Kodi a school committee athandiza aphunzitsi kangati pazochitika zamkalasi mu ma Std 1-4 mwezi wathawu?			
40. Kodi makolo athandiza kangati ana a sukulu a mu Std 1 – 4 mo zochitika za mkalasi mwezi wathawu?			
41. Kodi a SMC/PTA anachita zotani kuti kujomba kwa aphunzitsi kuchepeko mwezi wathawu?			
42. Kodi a SMC/PTA anachita zotani kuti kujomba kwa ana a sukulu kuchepeko mwezi wathawu?			
43. Nanga a SMC/PTA analimbikitsa aphunzitsi munjira zotani kuti asamachedwe pobwera kusukulu mwezi wathawu?			
44. Nanga a SMC/PTA analimbikitsa ana a sukulu munjira zotani kuti asamachedwe pobwera kusukulu mwezi wathawu?			
45. Kodi a SMC/PTA achitapo chiyani pa za SIP mwezi wathawu?			
46. Kodi mwezi ukubwerawu zofunikira kwambiri kuchita mu SIP monga a SMC/PTA ndi chiyani?			

Summary Report Card

School _____ Zone _____ District _____

		Current status(Tick what applies and discuss)	What the community should to do to improve the situation
A	Enrolment	Low Average High enrolment Gender parity: High – Even - Low	
B	Teachers	Adequate Inadequate Gender representation: High – Even- Low	
C	Teaching	Teachers have lesson plans (All/ Not all) Teachers never miss classes (True/Not true) Teachers assess learners' performance regularly(All/Not all)	
D	Learning	Good performance Average performance Low performance	
E	Teacher attendance	High attendance rate Satisfactory High absenteeism	
F	Learner Attendance	High attendance rate Satisfactory High absenteeism	
G	Instructional materials	Adequate Inadequate	
H	Professional support	Adequate Inadequate	
I	Community support	Adequate Inadequate	
J	Development of SIP	Priority	

School Report Card Data Collection Monitoring Tool

Objectives:

- Audit the validity of data collected
- Comment on factors that contribute (positively or negatively) to validity of data
- Understand SMC's opinion of the process
- Understand school staff's opinion of process
- Describe nature of relationship between SMC and school
- Discover what SMC/school understand the purpose of the activity is
- Explore how the process can be improved and sustained
- How is the PSIP process implemented at the school

Steps of monitoring visit:

1. Explain the purpose of monitoring visit
2. Complete the Data Quality Assessment form noting each column (Source, Accessibility, Comment)
3. Document each step of the process:

a. Time of arrival
b. Where does data collection team go first?
c. How do they introduce the purpose of the activity? To whom?
d. People involved in data collection.
i. Number of people
ii. SMC member(s) – position in SMC
iii. Assisting teacher – which standard/section (If not in lower section, Why?)

iv. What roles does each member play?
1. SMC member
2. Teacher
3. Other?
e. List where they go to collect data?
i. For what purpose at each location
f. Do they visit classrooms? For what purpose?
g. Describe how data is recorded.
i. Who does the recording?
ii. Do they use the standard SRC form?
h. Describe how data is summarized
i. By whom?
ii. When?
i. How are the relationships:
i. Within data collection team
ii. Between data collection team and school staff

iii. Between SMC and school staff
iv. Describe resistance encountered

4. Conduct interviews:

a. With SMC member:
i. What do they view the purpose of the school report cards?
ii. What are the major challenges?
iii. Which items create problems? Which are easy?

iv. How does the school respond to you when collecting data?

v. How does the community respond to the data?

vi. How can the process be improved?

b. With head teacher and assisting teacher:

i. How do you feel about the school report card process?

ii. How do you feel about SMCs involvement in monitoring school progress?

iii. How can the process be improved?

iv. Does the school conduct a school performance report under PSIP?

v. How is the PSIP implemented at school level?

1. Who conducts the data collection?

2. Who does the reporting?

3. To whom is it reported?

Observation Tool of SRC Debriefing Meeting

Objectives:

- To document and gain an understanding of:
 - the extent of participation and contribution of community members
 - how well community members understand their roles
 - how well the meeting is communicated and attended
 - which issues are prioritized by the SMC during the debriefing meeting
 - what actions are agreed upon to address issues arising from the SRC debriefing
 - how much of an impact the SRC has on developing SIPs, if any
 - the extent to which SMC members participate in developing SIPs

Steps of monitoring visit:

5. Explain the purpose of monitoring visit
6. Observe debriefing meeting using observation checklist:

a. Who facilitates the meeting? List all involved.

i. Who takes the prominent role?

ii. What role does the assisting teacher take?

b. Describe the participation level of the SMC members.

i. Gender parity:

1. Percentage of men vs. women in attendance

2. Estimated percentage of contributions by men vs. women?

ii. List dominant issues SMC members raise

iii.	Level of engagement of SMC members (Highly interactive, moderately interactive, passive listening, many voices or some voices shut out). Describe.
iv.	What action points are proposed? By whom?
c.	Are records/notes being taken of the meeting? By whom?
d.	Is there any link made between this meeting and the SIP?
e.	Any other general observations

7. Conduct focus group session:

a. What do they view the purpose of the school report cards?

b. What do they find useful from this meeting? Not useful?

c. What do they think they can do with this information?

d. How can the process be improved?

e. Will/can they sustain this without support? When? How often?

Annex B. School Report Card Training Manual

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Acronyms

CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DIAS	Department of Inspection and Advisory Services
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
INSET	In-service Education and Training
NEST	National Education Sector Plan
MoEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
MTPDS	Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support
NPC	National Primary Curriculum
NPC M & E	National Primary Curriculum Monitoring and Evaluation
PEA	Primary Education Advisor
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PS	Permanent Secretary
SIP	School improvement Plan
SMC	School Management Committee
SRC	School Report Card
STD	Standard
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Introduction

This training manual is designed to provide guidelines for facilitators who will train members of School Management Committees/Parent Teacher Associations in the use of a School Report Card in order to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the National Primary Curriculum with special focus on early grade teaching and learning in literacy. It provides instructions on how the facilitator should approach a topic first by giving a brief background to a topic then giving what the expected outcomes of the topic are. This is followed by a list of materials needed to effectively facilitate the training. Instructions on how to proceed in the training of each topic are laid out step wise, providing substantive background information for the facilitator or providing references where the facilitator can get more information. It provides instruction on how the participants should be organized, what activities the participants should be involved in and how they should demonstrate their understanding of the issues being presented. The use of simple language and continual involvement of participants in simple and short tasks renders the manual user friendly. The training is hands on in nature and therefore allows all participants to be involved directly in the completion of the SRC. More importantly the training is set to be conducted in the vernacular language giving more chance of active participation by all. A guideline for collecting the data is provided to act as reference material for the SMC when they are collecting data in their schools.

The importance of providing the manual is to ensure that there is consistency in the training as it will be conducted by different facilitators in different zones. It guarantees that there is going to be a high likelihood of facilitators using the same approach to the training and that there is going to be the same understanding of issues that are covered during the training. Apart from this the manual is user friendly and therefore can be used by other Ministry officials or stakeholders in other zones and districts not covered by MTPDS. This is critical for sustainability of the monitoring and evaluation of the NPC by SMCs/PTAs.

Key elements of the manual are the topics covered. These include the importance of SMC to monitor and evaluate the NPC as one way of supporting the implementation of the NPC; how to record school particulars; understanding data on teacher and learner competencies and how to capture the information; discussions on teacher and learner absenteeism and how to record the information; documenting availability of teaching and learning materials; documenting teacher continuous professional development; how to document community support to schools; how to summarize data in form of a School Report Card and helping SMC understand the guidelines for using the data collection instrument and the SRC. All materials are to

The facilitators addressed in this manual are MTPDS Divisional Monitoring and Evaluation Officers. It is also envisaged that PEAs can take on this responsibility in zones where MTPDS staff are not available.

The importance of training SMC in monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the NPC is emphasized in the National Education Sector Plan (NESP, 2007) and supported by the National strategy for Community Participation in Primary School Management (NSCPPSM) (Malawi

government, 2004). MTPDS is mandated to work with parents and communities to develop their capacities to support the monitoring of and making improvements in early grade reading. Engaging parents and communities through SMC and PTAs in M & E work is a means to engage and reinforce these actors in understanding the fundamental questions underlying the M & E framework. In so doing they also build their own capacities to monitor and collect information which in turn will empower them to use that information at the school level. The data generated in the SRC provide a perfect launching point for development of school improvement plans as envisaged in the National Strategy for Community Participation in Primary School Management (Malawi Government, 2004) and prioritized in the NESP(MoEST, 2007)

Session 1: Welcoming Protocols(Time: 2 hours)

Master of ceremony welcomes all

Self-introductions

Brief introduction of the training by facilitator:

The facilitator explains that the training is about equipping School Management Committees (SMCs) with skills to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the National Primary Curriculum (NPC) using a simple school report card. The facilitator explains that the participants are members of the school committees from schools in the zone including the zonal Primary Education Advisor (PEA). In the workshop the participants will explore how schools keep their records and how to use information from those records. They will practice collecting data using an instrument specially designed to be used by the SMC. They will also practice analyzing and interpreting data in order to inform parents and school committees the progress of schools in providing support to teachers and learners and how they are performing in class. The facilitator informs the participants that the teachers and committee members were requested to bring various documents and school records to be used in the training.

Remarks by MTPDS Official

Remarks by MoEST Official

Group photograph






Session 2: Supporting the implementation of NPC (Time: 45 minutes)

Introduction

The MoEST, with support from MTPDS, developed a National Primary Curriculum Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Strategy as part of an overall curriculum review process. The implementation of NPC, M & E Framework and Strategy requires the involvement of the communities around the schools in order to foster co-ordination between parents and teachers. This is a very important strategy in the effort to support and enhance teacher competencies and learner performance. While monitoring and evaluation serves to inform and guide the implementation of the curriculum, it is also about keeping records and supporting evidence. Therefore engaging SMC in monitoring and evaluation of the NPC will also help schools to keep track of teacher performance, learner performance and reinforce support from the communities themselves through improved School Improvement Plans (SIPs). In this respect it is important to develop a strategy for guiding communities to carry out their roles effectively. This session deals with the importance of SMC in taking part in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the National Primary Curriculum.

Learning outcomes

At the end of the session participants will:

-  Develop understanding of the NPC M & E Framework and Strategy
-  Broaden their perspective of community involvement in school governance
-  Appreciate learner performance focused on literacy
-  Understand how teachers are assessed
-  Appreciate the need to monitor and evaluate the implementation of NPC, teacher performance and learner performance

Materials needed

- National Strategy for Community Participation in Management of Primary Schools
- NPC M & E Framework
- NPC M & E Strategy
- Flip Chart
- Marker pens

Activities

1. Explaining the NPC M & E Framework and Strategy and Community involvement

- Using information outlined in the NPC M & E Framework, the facilitator describes the NPC starting from the review process to the implementation stressing that this was a way to improve the quality and relevance of education and highlights the focus on literacy in the lower grades.

- The Facilitator explains the need for an M & E Framework, pointing out the objectives as stated in the Framework from page 4 to page 5
- The facilitator also explains the set of indicators selected to be monitored and evaluated as given in the framework.
- Then the facilitator describes the Strategy for Monitoring and Evaluation of the NPC key points being planning and budgeting, preparation and printing of materials, training of data collectors, data collection, data entry and analysis and reporting.
- Then the Facilitator reminds participants of the importance of community participation in M & E of the implementation of the NPC. Then Participants go into groups composed of three schools.

2. Participants go into groups of three schools

- In each group the participants discuss how communities can support M & E of the implementation of the NPC focusing on what they do in their schools and then expanding on what else is feasible to widen the scope.
- Participants discuss how they monitor teacher competence in their schools and how else they can do this to widen the scope of monitoring teacher competence. Each group reports the current practice and their proposals
- Participants discuss how they monitor learner performance and how else they can monitor learner performance and progress focused on literacy. Each group reports current practice and what they have proposed.
- Then participants select strategies that are feasible on a nation-wide scale.

Conclusion

- ❖ In conclusion the facilitator selects activities that match with the proposed methods in the Strategy which communities can use to monitor the implementation of the NPC
- ❖ The facilitator explains the Strategy communities will take to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the NPC, teacher performance and the progress of learners in literacy. The facilitator mentions that the monitoring will be in form of a School Report Card which will be filled by the committee representative helped by one teacher selected by the school staff.
- ❖ Facilitator mentions that the next sessions will focus on collecting data from the school.




Session 3: Recording School Particulars (30 minutes)

Introduction

Each school is unique. It has special characteristics and features that are not found in other schools. It is therefore important to highlight the characteristics which identify the school and singles it out from the many schools in the zone or district. It is also important to document when the information about the school is collected so that any changes between different periods of times can be discerned and analyzed in proper context. In this session participants will discuss which school particulars, enrolments and staffing levels to focus on in the Monitoring and Evaluation exercise.

Learning outcomes

At the end of the session participants will be able to

-  Record school particulars
-  Record standard 1 to standard 4 learner enrolments
-  Record standard 1 to standard 4 staffing levels

Materials needed

- School Report Cards for all schools
- Std 1 – Std 4 attendance registers
- Staffing records from all schools
- Chart showing staffing at one school in the zone
- Enrolment records for all schools
- Flip charts
- Marker pens

Activities

1. School Particulars

- Facilitator introduces the topic of what constitutes school particulars
- Facilitator justifies the use of school particulars on the School Report Card (SRC)

2. Participants go into groups of three schools.

- Then the facilitator distributes SRC and draws the attention of the participants to the section A where school particulars are to be filled.
- In their groups participants discuss what to write in each space.
- They discuss where to find numbers of teachers in Std 1 – 4.
- Then they discuss where to find enrolment of girls and boys in Std 1 – 4.
- Still in their groups participants from each school use staffing chart or staff records to fill the number of teachers in Std 1 – 4.
- Similarly participants use class registers to fill the enrolments of boys and girls in Std 1 – 4 in their schools.

- Then participants discuss who they can ask to get quick and valid responses. In addition, participants discuss how they can verify the responses given by school personnel.

Conclusion

Facilitator concludes by mentioning class teachers, section heads, head teachers, class registers and staff records as sources of information to be filled in section A of the SRC.

Facilitator stresses the need for disaggregating figures by gender where necessary and ends session by way of introducing the next topic.

Session 4: Data on Teaching (20 minutes)

Introduction

Teaching is a critical aspect of the implementation of the NPC. It is therefore important to devise ways of monitoring and evaluating the teaching that goes on in a classroom. Since the focus of this exercise is literacy, the monitoring will also be focused on teaching of literacy in early grades. The importance of early grade literacy has been documented in many studies. In the NCP M&E Strategy document the MoEST declared that early grade literacy and numeracy were a priority to improve learning outcomes in later grades in school. In this session participants will be introduced to indicators that will be used to monitor and evaluate teaching early grade literacy.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session the participants will be able to

- ✚ Record the number of teachers in standard 1 to standard 4 who have lesson plans.
- ✚ Use School Check List to determine the number of teachers with lesson plans
- ✚ Use School Record Books to determine the number of teachers with updated learner assessment records
- ✚ Record the number of teachers with updated assessment records in the SRC

Materials needed

- Lesson plans
- Check list
- Record books

Activities

1. Importance of lesson plans and assessment of learners' work

- The Facilitator explains the importance of teachers drawing lesson plans before teaching a lesson.
- The facilitator stresses /points out that lesson plans alone do not translate into the actual teaching but that teachers must be present in class and follow the lesson plan. Therefore there should also be evidence of the actual teaching having taken place.
- The facilitator also points out that important evidence that teaching took place is by looking at the assessment of learners' work.

2. Verifying evidence of lesson planning

- Participants go into groups of three schools different from the previous grouping
- Then participants discuss how to get evidence of lesson plans for the day they visit the school. The assisting teachers share their experiences with the SMC/PTA members.
- Participants then practice to use check lists, record books and view lesson plans to fill in the spaces in the SRC.

- Participants then discuss where to get information about classes which were not taught during the past month. Assisting teachers take the lead in discussing school records which house information about missed classes.
 - Participants then practice filling in the number of missed classes in the SRC using record books and check lists.
3. Verifying evidence of assessment records
- In the same groups participants then discuss how teachers keep assessment records.
 - Then the participants familiarize themselves with determining how many teachers keep their assessment records.
 - Participants practice filling number of teachers who have learner assessment records in the SRC.
 - Then participants discuss how difficulties in filling in the data/information may arise and how to overcome them.
 - Finally let the participants summarize the status of learner assessment by teachers in literacy by filling the Summary SRC.

Conclusion

As a conclusion the facilitator asks members of SMC/PTA at random to review the sources of information for the availability of lesson plans, the classes which were not taught during the past month and numbers of teachers who keep assessment records.




Session 5: Data on Learning (20 minutes)

Introduction

There are several learning areas in the NPC. They are different for the infant section, junior section and the senior section. This monitoring and evaluation is focusing on literacy in the early grades which are Stds. 1 – 4. This means that we want to monitor how learning to read is progressing in the first four grades. This session outlines how to collect data on the progress learners are making in literacy.

Learning outcomes

At the end of the session participants will be able to

-  Recognize the Scores of learners in reading in assessment books
-  Determine the scores of learners in Std 2 and Std 4
-  Record the assessment learner progress in reading in Std 2 and Std 4

Materials needed

- Observation checklist
- Progress record

Activities

1. Highlighting different methods of learner assessment

- The NPC stresses the use of continuous assessment in schools as this has several pedagogical advantages including helping teachers to identify learners' weaknesses early enough for remediation and guiding teachers in modifying instruction to improve teaching and learning. The facilitator explains the methods used by teachers to capture progress in learning. Some use the NPC method of assigning numbers in a scale of 1 to 4 where 1 designates excellent progress while 4 designates failure to attain required performance level. There are also those who use raw scores or percentages to show levels of performance. It is also possible to find those who have taken after the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) system and are indicating percentage of learners who have reached desirable levels.
- Facilitator should emphasize the need for the SMC/PTA monitoring teams to be fully conversant with the system used at their schools in order for them to document learner progress accurately.

2. Participants view and study different progress records.

- Participants go into pairs according to school. Let them discuss what system of learner assessment exists at their school. The assisting teachers lead the discussion explaining the systems used in their schools to their team mates.
- Then let the PEA explain more about the systems found in his or her zone.
- Then let the teams fill in the SRC using the observation check list and the progress records.

- Let each teams discuss what the results mean in terms of performance and progress of learners in literacy.
- Then each team reports in a plenary what their results mean.
- After this let all participants discuss how difficulties in filling information about learner performance might arise.
- Finally let the participants summarize the status of learner performance in literacy by filling the Summary SRC.

Conclusion

Facilitator asks members of the SMC/PTA to recap what their systems of recording learner progress are. The facilitator also asks the participants to recount what the records in their schools indicate with respect to learner performance and progress.





Session 6: Teacher Absenteeism (20 minutes)

Introduction

Teacher absenteeism is when teachers are not available in class to teach their planned work. This reduces the time on task for learners, giving rise to low coverage of materials thereby depriving learners the opportunity to learn as much as they should. Worse still, when learners are not learning they lose interest in schooling and this is more likely to result in dropping out. Less time on task due to teacher absenteeism inevitably results in low performance and thus low quality education. Therefore teacher absenteeism/ attendance are one of the critical indicators of how well the NPC is being implemented. This session deals with how to record teacher absenteeism on the SRC.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session participants will be able to

-  Understand the meaning of absenteeism and its implications
-  Understand a wider context of reasons why teachers are absent
-  To determine cases of teacher absenteeism at school
-  To record teacher absenteeism

Materials needed

- Time book

Activities

Participants go into groups of three schools

1. Discussion on teacher absenteeism

- In each group participants discuss the effects of teacher absenteeism.
- Participants discuss the causes of teacher absenteeism.
- Participants also discuss the extent of late coming of teachers to school and the reasons for this at their respective schools.
- Participants then discuss how schools keep records of teacher absenteeism.
- The participants also discuss who can best give information about teacher absenteeism.
- Still in their groups let participants practice recording information about teacher absenteeism in the SRC. Groups share their entries and discuss what they mean.

2. Discussion on punctuality of teachers at school

- Then the participants switch to discuss how each school records information about teachers punctuality at school. Groups share information through group presentation “popcorn” style allowing those who are ready to come forward on their own and report
- Let participants practice filling information about punctuality of teachers at school in the SRC.
- Let the participants discuss how the information might prove difficult to collect at school level.

- Then let all participants summarize the situation of teacher absenteeism and punctuality at the school in the Summary SRC.

Conclusion

The facilitator asks two members of the SMC/PTA to summarize how to capture information on teachers' absenteeism and on teacher punctuality at school.






Session 7: Learner Absenteeism (20 minutes)

Introduction

When a teacher is teaching, in most cases, learners follow the lesson based on previous work. New classroom work can easily be understood by learners if they are able to connect with knowledge acquired in previous lessons. A learner who misses several lessons finds it extremely difficult to cope with new work. Such learners are likely to perform less well than those who attend school regularly. Teaching also becomes difficult as teachers struggle to accommodate the learners who are lost because they were not present when new work was being presented. Progress becomes slow and overall the quality of learning is compromised. Eventually the learners themselves get disillusioned with schooling and end up dropping out. This session is about recording learner absenteeism in the SRC and interpreting the rate of attendance at school.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session participants will be able to

-  Understand the wider context of learner absenteeism.
-  Determine the number of absentees from school records.
-  Record the number of learners absent in the previous month.
-  Articulate a wide repertoire of ideas about mechanism to reduce absenteeism.
-  Record the mechanisms used by the school to reduce learner absenteeism.

Materials needed

- Class registers
- Punishment book
- Log book

Activities

PARTICIPANTS GO INTO GROUPS OF THREE SCHOOLS

1. Discussion on learner absenteeism

Let participants discuss learner absenteeism focusing on

- the effects of learner absenteeism highlighting the following
- The reasons why learners may be absent.
- how the schools record learner absenteeism
- how schools try to reduce absenteeism
- where and who can provide information about learner absenteeism

2. Familiarizing with record books

- Let participants familiarize themselves with school registers, punishment books and log books and the information stored in them.

- Let them practice filling in the information on learner absenteeism.
- Let participants discuss the problems which might arise in collecting data on learner absenteeism.
- Then let all participants summarize the situation of learner absenteeism in the Summary SRC.

Conclusion

1. The facilitator asks the participants at random (popcorn style) to recap where to get information about absentees
2. The facilitator asks the participants at random (popcorn style) to articulate what should be recorded in each cell under each item






Session 8: Learning Materials (20 minutes)

Introduction

The most important resources for reading are books and other reading materials. The more the learners are exposed to books the more likely they will progress well in reading. In this session the SMC will assess the availability of books by recording the number of learners in a school who have no access to reading materials.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session participants will be able to

-  Identify Chichewa and English books for Std 2 and 4
-  Record number of learners who do not have books
-  Appreciate what supplementary books are
-  Use school records to determine the number of learners using supplementary books
-  Record learners who have had access to supplementary books at school

Materials needed

- Std 2 and Std 4 Chichewa learners' books
- Std 2 and Std 4 English learners' books
- Std 1 – 4 Chichewa supplementary books
- Std 1 – 4 English supplementary books
- Stock book

Activities

Participants form groups composed of members from three schools

1. Discussion on learning materials
 - Let participants discuss what learning materials are. Let them discuss the whole range of learning materials available in schools.
 - Participants should familiarize themselves with Chichewa and English books in the early grades.
 - Let them share information contained in the stock book for the early grades.
 - They then discuss how they can find out how many learners did not have books.
 - They also discuss how children access and use supplementary books.
 - They discuss how to find out how many learners have used supplementary readers.
2. Let the participants practice entering data in each cell.
3. Then each team discusses what the data shows in terms of availability of reading materials to learners.
4. Two groups present the situation in their schools according to the information recorded.
5. Then let all schools summarize the status of teaching materials in the Summary SRC.
6. Participants then discuss any problems that might arise in collecting and documenting this data.

Conclusion

1. Facilitator summarizes the topic by recapping on the use of stock book and physical check of number of learners without books in a classroom.
2. Facilitator asks two members of the SMC/PTA to recount how to get numbers of learners who have used supplementary readers.
3. Facilitator emphasizes that the focus is on textbooks in this exercise.





Session 9: Continuous Professional Development (20 minutes)

Introduction

Teachers need Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to keep them abreast with current theories and practices. These can be in various forms including INSET and class room support. The NESP recommends that a teacher should attend at least three INSETs per year and should also be supervised and supported a number of times in a year.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session participants will be able to

-  Understand various forms of teacher professional support
-  Understand various ways of recording support given to teachers
-  Use school record books to determine professional support given to teachers
-  Record forms of professional support rendered to teachers at the school in the previous month

Materials needed

- Log books
- Minute books

Activities

1. Facilitator explains the need to support teachers in various ways
2. Let participants go into groups of three schools
 - In each group let the participants discuss support to teachers in general
 - how teachers can be supported in their work in the classroom
3. Facilitator explains the nature of classroom support which the exercise is looking for.
4. In their groups let participants discuss what schools can do to support literacy and each school representative presents what has happened in their schools.
5. Then let participants practice filling in the form to indicate the professional support given to teachers at their schools.
6. In a plenary two or three schools report what they have recorded and what they mean.
7. Then let the team from each school summarize the support on the SRC.
8. Participants are asked to discuss how the information might prove difficult to collect and document.

Conclusion

The facilitator concludes by indicating that the support which needs to be recorded is classroom observation by head teacher and PEA and any CPD given to teachers. Apart from these any activities organized by the school to help learners are considered as relevant in this case.




Session 10: Community Support (20 minutes)

Introduction

Community support is critical in linking school environment and the home. It also fosters collaboration between parents and teachers. There are many ways in which the community can support the implementation of the NPC with special focus on teaching and learning. The National Strategy for Community Participation in Primary School Management (Malawi Government, 2004) mandates communities to take an active role in supporting the implementation of the curriculum. This session lays out how SMC can monitor and evaluate the support that the communities render to schools.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session participants will be able to

-  Appreciate the various forms of community support to schools.
-  Use log books and minute books to determine instances of community support to schools.
-  Record community support rendered to school.

Materials needed

- Log Book
- Minute book

Activities

1. Facilitator explains and reminds the participants of the responsibility of parents and SMC/PTA in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the NPC. The facilitator explains that parents and SMC/PTAs can support classroom practice as well as school activities.
2. Discussion on community support
 - Let participants go into groups of three schools.
 - Let them discuss how parents and communities can support classroom practice.
 - They also discuss how parents and SMC/PTA can support school activities focusing on literacy.
 - With the assisting teachers taking lead, let the participants discuss how such activities are recorded
 - Participants then study log books and minute books to familiarize themselves with how schools keep records of external support
 - Participants then record the support which occurred in their schools
3. Two groups are then asked to report in a plenary.
4. Participants are asked to record a summary of the situation at their schools in the Summary SRC.
5. Participants discuss and reflect on the difficulties which might arise in collecting the information about community support to learning.

Conclusion

Facilitator summarizes the community forms of support to classroom and schools which are likely to be found in schools in their zones. This is the final indicator that will be used in the monitoring and evaluation exercise.




Session 11: Summary Sheet (30 minutes)

Introduction

The data collected by the SMC should be concise, easy to collect and easy to understand. The person responsible for interpreting the data should find it easy to communicate the findings to the community. In turn the community should be able to make sense out of the information and be able to draw their own conclusions regarding what needs to be done to improve the situation. The SMC as whole should analyze the previous SIP and see how the new situation at the school as depicted by the SRC can be improved upon. This action cycle will repeat after every monitoring and evaluation tour/visit.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session participants will be able to

-  Summarize data on the school report card
-  Interpret data summarized on the school report card
-  Report findings to SMC/PTA

Materials needed

- School report card
- School report card questionnaire

Activities

1. The facilitator goes through the summary sheet with the participants pointing out the main features.
2. Then the participants go into groups of three schools and discuss what should be recorded in each cell.
3. After the discussions the participants take turns in popcorn style to report what they discussed for each cell.
4. The facilitator comments on each presentation.
5. After the presentation the SMC member from each school simulates a presentation to parents and SMC by presenting findings to the group.

Conclusion

The facilitator concludes session by giving general comments on presentation to committees emphasizing the need to draw new SIPs based on the findings of the monitoring and evaluation visit.

Session 12: Guidelines for using the School Report Card (30 minutes)

Introduction

This School Report Card is an important tool for the SMC. It gives them a way of understanding what is going on in their school. It gives them a way of collecting information systematically so that they can make informed decisions on what they should do to improve school performance. It empowers them to delve deeper into what goes on in the implementation of the curriculum at school level. This information feeds directly into their school improvement plans. Therefore there is need to ensure consistency in the data collection process. These guidelines are meant to clarify any ambiguity found in the items so that all users understand what the question is asking, who can give the responses and where that information is stored. This guideline also serves to guarantee ensure any other persons not directly involved in the training can also use. This is a measure to ensure sustainability in the use of the SRC.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session participants should be able to

-  To follow and use the guidelines for monitoring and evaluating the NPC using the SRC

Materials needed

- School report card
- School report card questionnaire
- Guide lines for using the SRC

Activities

1. The facilitator takes the participants through the guide lines, section by section
2. Participants go into groups of four and discuss each section to find out if the guidelines are making sense
3. Each group chooses one section and presents their understanding of the section in a plenary explaining what the instructions and the guidelines are pointing out.

Conclusion

Facilitator summarizes the presentations to conclude the session. In conclusion the facilitator explains that the SMC/PTA will report the findings to the communities, parents and other stakeholders. The purpose of reporting is to generate discussions on how the teacher and learner performance can be supported further. This support is to be documented in the SIP and will need to be modified on a monthly basis after each M& E exercise.

References

Malawi Government (2004) The National Strategy for Community Participation in Primary school Mangement. Malawi Government

MTPDS(2011) Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the National Primary Curriculum. MTPDS/USAID

MTPDS(2011) The National Primary Curriculum Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy. MTPDS/USAID

MoEST(2007) National Education Sector Plan 2007 – 2016. MoEST

Training Time Table

DAY 1		
TIME	ACTIVITY	COMMENTS
8:00 - 8:30	Registration	
8: 30 – 8: 45	Welcome remarks and introduction	
8: 45 – 9:00	Brief background	Facilitator
9: 00 – 9: 15	Remarks by MTPDS representative	
9: 15 – 9: 30	Opening by Ministry Official	PEA, CPEA, DEM
9: 30 – 10:00	Group Photograph	
10:00 – 10: 45	Refreshments	
10: 45 - 11:30	Supporting the implementation of NPC through M & E	Facilitator
11:30 - 12:00	Recording school particulars	
12:00 - 1:30	Lunch Break	
1:30 - 1:50	Teaching	
1:50 - 2: 10	Learning	
2:10 - 2:30	Teacher absenteeism	
2:30 - 2:50	Learner absenteeism	
2:50 – 3:10	Availability of learning material	
3:10 – 3:25	Refreshments	
3:25 – 3:45	Documenting teacher continuous professional development	
3:45 – 4:05	Documenting community support to schools	
4:05 – 4:35	How to enter data on Summary Sheet	
4:35 – 5:00	Understanding guide lines for using the SRC	
5:00 – 5:10	Closing	PEA

Invitation Letter

Dear Participants,

The MPTDS has organized a training session for one school committee member and one teacher from each school in the zone. The training is to equip the participants with knowledge and skills in monitoring the implementation of the new National Primary Curriculum focusing on teacher performance and learner performance in literacy. This is important because when communities are aware of the way their teachers and learners are progressing in class they are able to provide the necessary support through improved School Improvement Plans. We are therefore inviting you to attend this one day training at the Teacher Development Centre. After the training it is expected that you will be able to collect data and present it to community and other stakeholders so that they can modify their School Improvement Plans

In order to facilitate the training in data collection we ask you to bring the following documents from your school:-

1. class registers for Std 2 and Std 4
2. Staff/Teachers records
3. Time book
4. Teacher attendance records
5. Learner assessment records
6. Stock books for Std 2 and 4
7. Logs books
8. SMC/PTA minute books
9. Punishment books
10. School Improvement Plans.

Transport expenses will be reimbursed and lunch allowance will be provided. We are looking forward to a successful training and improved performance of learners in literacy.

Yours Sincerely,

Divisional Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

MTPDS